

AIR POUCH
PRIORITY

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

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FROM : LONDON

5561
Desp. No.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

4 May 20, 1953
DATE

REF :

25 For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.
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vp MAY22 COMM MSA TR
SUBJECT: IKKA, Hungarian Relief Organization

The Foreign Office has asked us orally for information on our attitude to IKKA, described as a Hungarian relief organization which arranges for shipments of gift parcels to persons in Hungary.

According to the Foreign Office, IKKA has a branch in Zurich through which persons may pay Swiss francs for the delivery of parcels to persons in Hungary. The British Government some time ago decided that British citizens could use this agency and the Bank of England can approve purchases of Swiss francs for this purpose. (Hungary will not accept sterling in this connection.) Very small use of the agency is made by persons in Britain. In the current year the total permitted has been only £160. The Foreign Office believes the operation to be a racket in which the Hungarian Government makes a large profit and allows for the use of the donee only a small part of the money deposited for his benefit. The Foreign Office would like to cancel the arrangement in so far as donors in Britain are concerned, but in view of the humanitarian aspects it expects considerable opposition to its viewpoint.

It has heard that the agency has a branch in New York in which the transactions amounted to some \$2,000,000 last year. It believes that the organization is also criticized in the US and that consideration is being given to terminating the operation there. It would appreciate any information that can be obtained on our attitude to the organization and our plans if any to restrict or terminate its activities in the US. Such a report will assist the British in their approach to the matter.

Action Requested:

Please supply the Embassy with information to enable it to reply to this inquiry.

Benjamin M. Hulley
Benjamin M. Hulley
First Secretary of Embassy

CC: Budapest
Bern

BMHulley:eh
REPORTER

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